UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

How to get my work published in a peer-reviewed journal

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UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
MARLENE AND STEWART GREENEBAUM
COMPREHENSIVE CANCER CENTER

NCI Comprehensive Cancer Center
A Cancer Center Designated by the National Cancer Institute

DISCLOSURE INFORMATION

- **Personal financial interests**
- Speaker bureau: MSD, Novartis, GuardantHealth; Scientific advisor: Mylan

- **Institutional financial interests**
- Research grant at Antwerp University Hospital, Belgium: Novartis, Sanofi

- **Non-financial interests**: Oncompass Steering scientific committee;
- OncoDNA: Research collaboration no remunerated for Exosomes (2017)

- **Leadership roles:**
- Educational Committee Member: IALSC - Vice President : ISLB (International Society of Liquid Biopsy) -
- Educational Chair: OLA Oncology Latin American Association - Faculty for ASCO International

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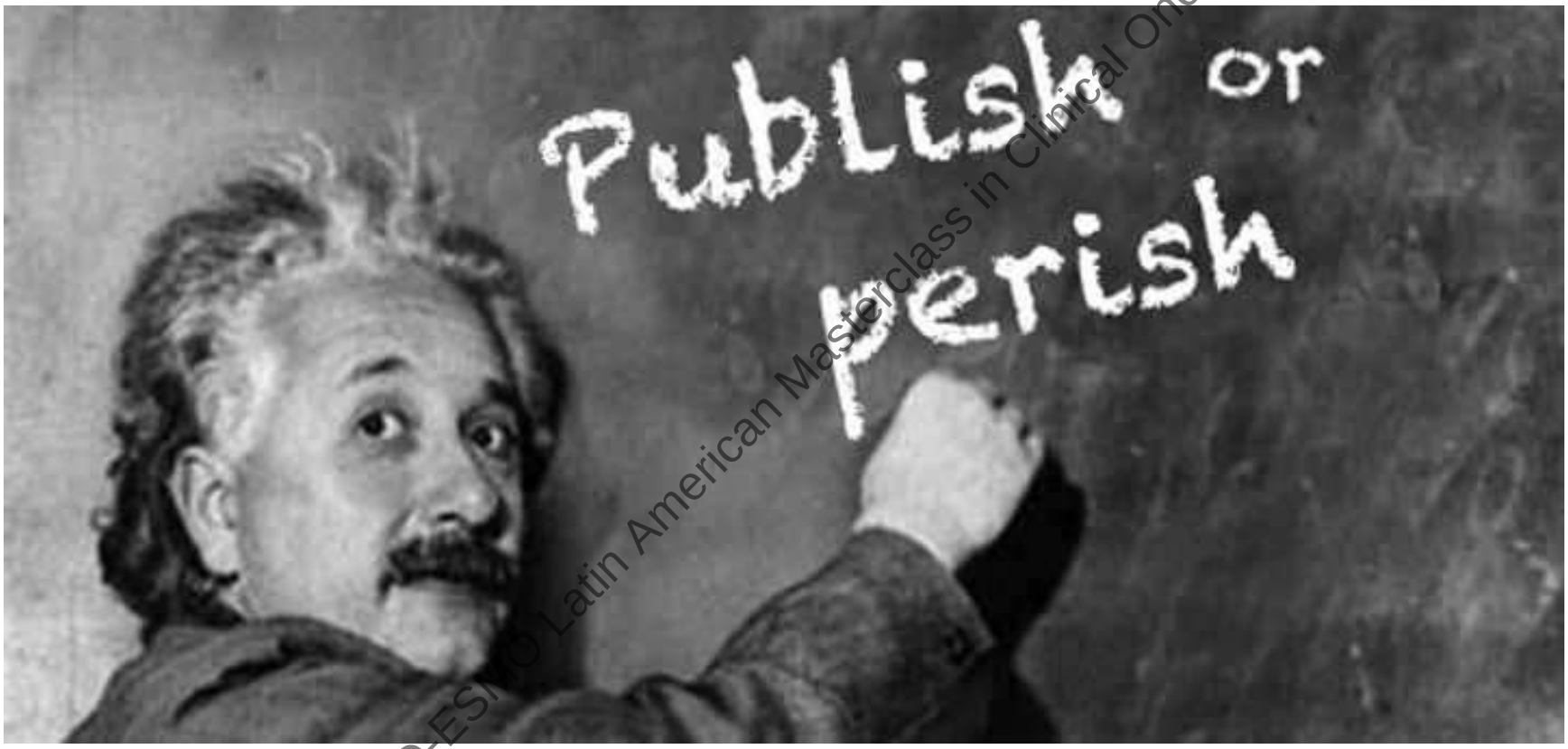

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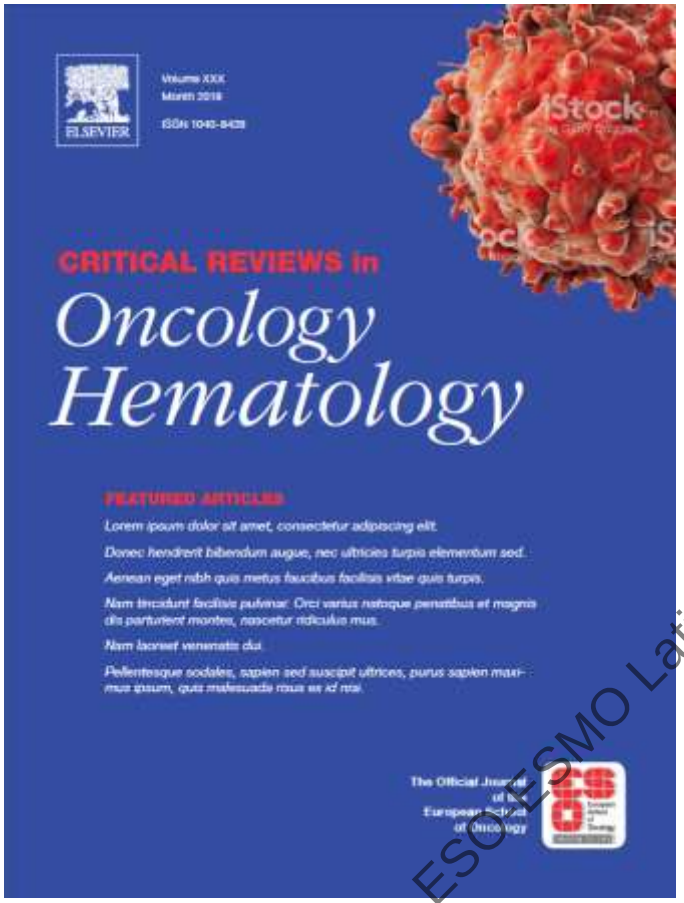

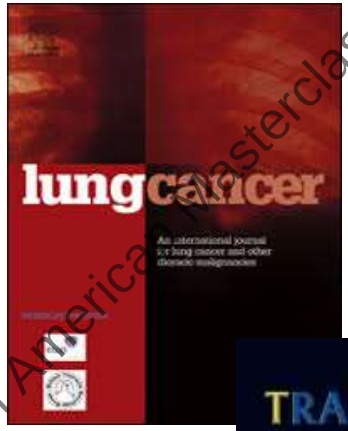

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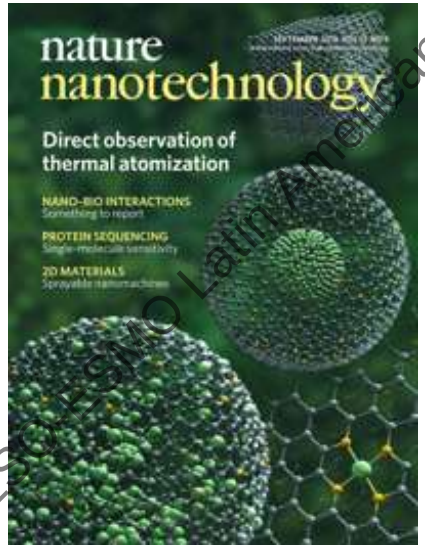

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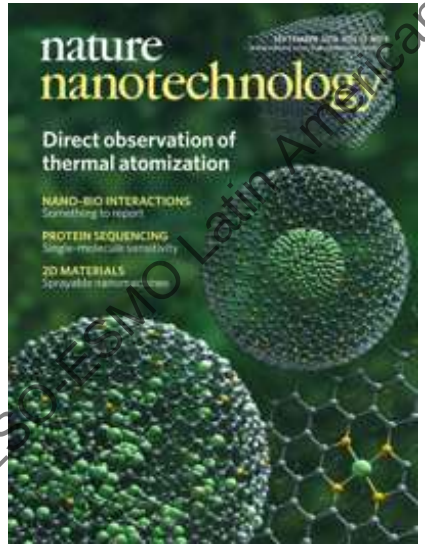

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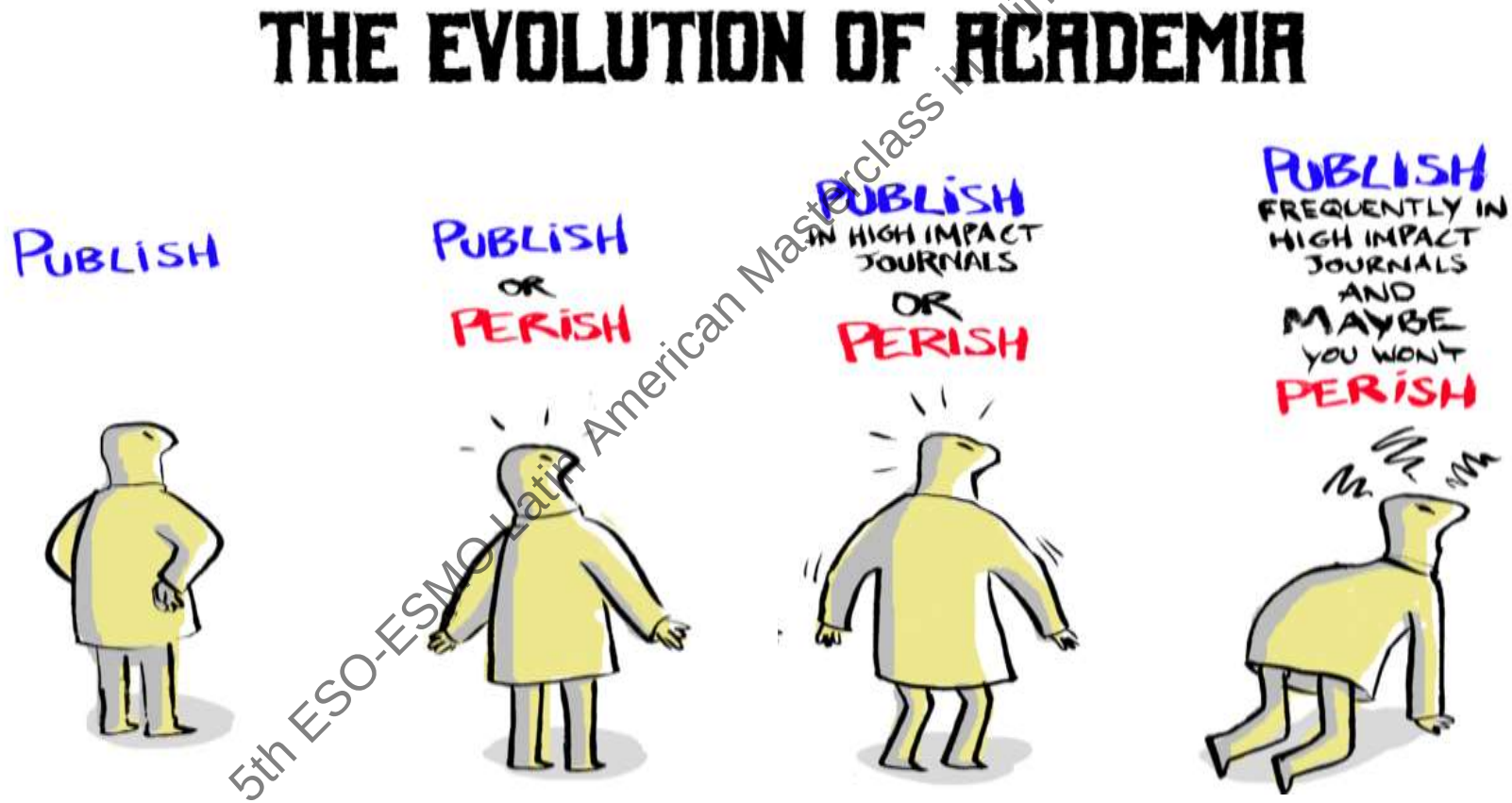
Do you really want to be an Academic??



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Why publish?

Publishing is one of the necessary steps embedded in the scientific research process.

What to publish:

- New and original results or methods
- Reviews or summaries of particular subject
- Manuscripts that advance the knowledge and understanding in a certain scientific field

What NOT to publish:

- Reports of no scientific interest
- Out of date work
- **Duplications** of previously published work
- Incorrect/unacceptable conclusions

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Before you start……

Don’t Panic!

The Hitchhiker's Guide To The Galaxy

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Questions to answer before you write

Think about **WHY** you want to publish your work.

- Is it **new and interesting**?
- Is it a current **hot topic**?
- Have you **provided solutions** to some difficult problems?
- Are you **ready** to publish at this point?

If all answers are "yes", then start preparations for your manuscript

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What type of manuscript?

- **Full articles** / Original articles: the most important papers. Often substantial and significant **completed pieces of research**.

- **Letters** / Rapid Communications/ Short communications: **quick and early communication of significant and original advances**. Much shorter than full articles (check limitations).

- **Review papers** / perspectives: summarize recent developments on a specific topic. Highlight important previously reported points. Not the place to introduce new information. **Often invited**.

Self-evaluate your work. Is it sufficient for a full article? Or are your results so thrilling that they should be shown as soon as possible?

Ask your supervisor and your colleagues for advice on manuscript type. Sometimes outsiders can see things more clearly than you.

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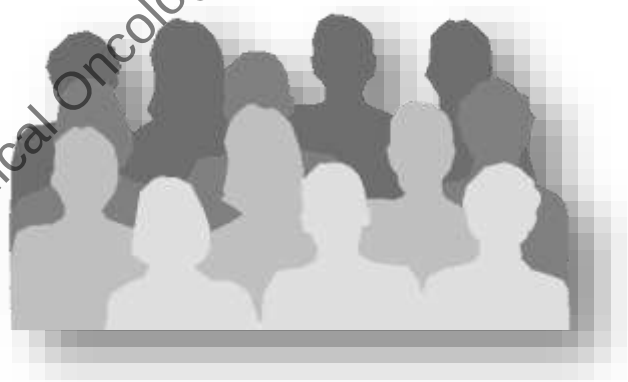
Identify the right audience for your paper



- Identify the audience

- Verify their **interest in the topic**
  - "Knock-down of mdr-1 activity in transiently transfected HEK cells" in *Pharmazeutische Industrie?*

- Determine the range of interest - **local vs international?**
  - "A bioequivalence study of ibuprofen tablets marketed in Southern Kosovo"

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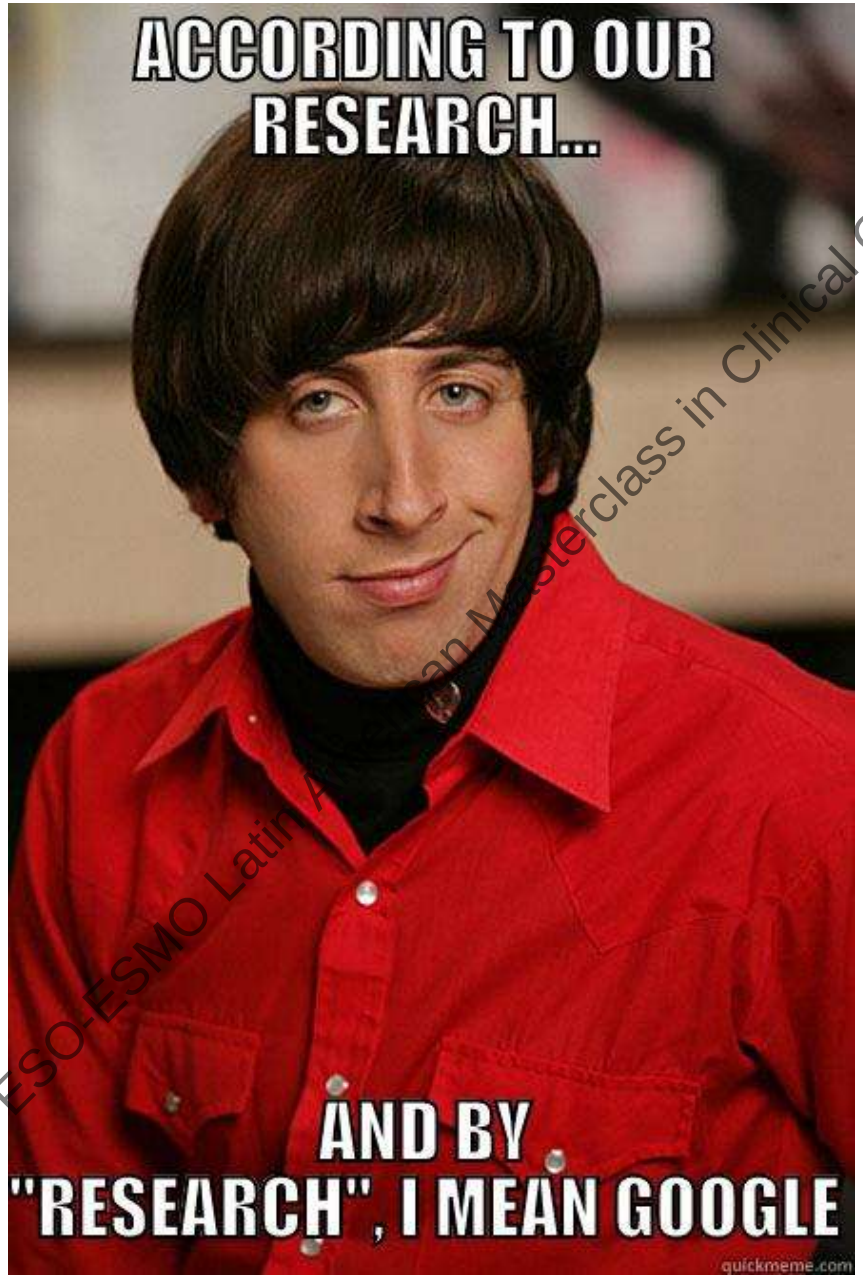

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An international editor says…

"The following problems appear much too frequently"

- *Submission of papers which are clearly out of scope*
- ***Failure to format** the paper according to the Guide for Authors*
- ***Inappropriate (or no) suggested reviewers***
- *Inadequate **response to reviewers***
- *Inadequate **standard of English***
- *Resubmission of rejected manuscripts without revision*

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– Paul Haddad, Editor, *Journal of Chromatography A*

What makes a good manuscript?

- Contains a **clear, useful, and exciting** scientific message.
- **Flows in a logical manner** that the reader can follow.
- Is **formatted to best showcase** the material.
- Is written in a style that **transmits the message clearly.**

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What makes a good manuscript?

It is all about the reader. **(Remember editors and reviewers are in this group!)**

- Writing a good manuscript is **NOT easy**. Be prepared to work hard on it.
  - **Cherish your work** – if you do not take care, why should the journal?
  - There is **no secret recipe for success** – just some simple rules, dedication, and hard work.
  - **Editors and reviewers** are all busy scientists, just like you – make things easy to **save their time!**

Presentation is critical!

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The general structure of a full article

- Title
- Authors
- Abstract
- Keywords
- Main text (IMRAD)
  - Introduction
  - Methods
  - Results
  - And
  - Discussion (Conclusions)
- Acknowledgements
- References
- Supplementary material

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Developing Your Title

- This is your opportunity to attract the reader's attention.
  - Remember: readers are the potential authors who will cite your article
- Keep it informative and concise.
  - Reviewers will check whether the title is specific and whether it reflects the content of the manuscript.
  - Editors hate titles that make no sense or fail to represent the subject matter adequately.
- Avoid technical jargon and abbreviations.
  - You wish to have a readership as large as possible, right?
- Discuss with your co-authors.

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The Abstract

- Should stand alone!
- Consider it the advertisement of your article. tell the prospective reader what you did the key findings.
  - Avoid using jargon and uncommon abbreviations.
- You must be accurate and specific!
  - Use words which reflect the precise meaning
- A clear abstract will strongly influence whether or not your work is further considered.
- Follow word limitations (50-300 words)!!!

a

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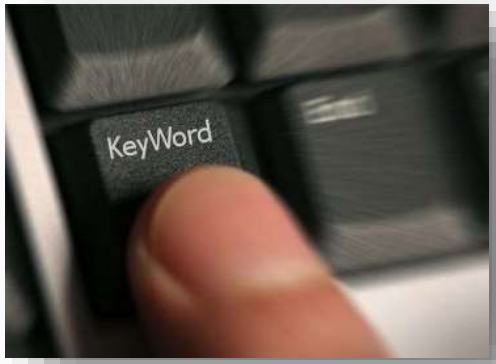
Keywords

- These are the labels of your manuscript and critical to correct indexing and searching.
  - Shouldn't be too broad or too narrow (think Google …)
- Use only those abbreviations that are established in the field.
  - e.g. DNA
- Check the Guide for Authors!
  - Number, label, definition, thesaurus, range, and other special requests



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Pitfalls of The Introduction

- Too wordy
  - Never use more words than necessary.
  - Do not turn this section into a history lesson. Readers lose interest.
- A mixed bag of introduction with results, discussion, and conclusion thrown in for good measure.
  - Always keep sections separate to ensure the manuscript flows logically from one section to the next.
- Excessive use of expressions such as “novel”, “first time”, “first ever”, “paradigm-changing” (use these sparingly!)

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Results

- **Only representative results, essential for the Discussion**, should be presented.
  - Show data of secondary importance in Supplementary Materials.
- **Do not "hide" data in the hope of saving it for a later paper**.
  - You may lose evidence to support your conclusion.
- Use **sub-headings to keep results of the same type together**
  - Easier to review and read.
- **Tell a clear and easy-to-understand story.**

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Discussion – What the results mean

- It **is the most important section of your article.** Here you get the chance to **SELL your data!**
  - Many manuscripts are rejected because the Discussion is weak

- Make the Discussion corresponding to the Results.
  - But do not reiterate the results

- You need to compare the published results with yours.
  - Do NOT ignore work in disagreement with yours – confront it and convince the reader that you are correct or better

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Conclusions

- Tells how your work advances the field from the present state of knowledge!
- **Without clear Conclusions, reviewers and readers will find it difficult to judge the work**, and whether or not it merits publication in the journal.
- Do NOT repeat the Abstract, or just list experimental results.
  - Trivial statements of your results are unacceptable in this section.
- Provide a clear scientific justification for your work, and indicate possible applications and extensions.
  - You should also suggest future experiments and/or point out those that are underway.

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Acknowledgements

Recognize those who helped in the research (you want them to help again, don't you?)

Include individuals who have assisted you in your study:

- Advisors
- Financial supporters
- Proofreaders
- Typists
- Suppliers who may have given materials

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References

- More mistakes are found in the references than any other part of the manuscript.
- It is one of the most annoying problems, and causes great headaches among editors…

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Cover letter – your chance to speak to the Editor directly

- View it as a job application letter; **you want to "sell" your work…**
- **WHY did you submit the manuscript to THIS journal?**
  - Do not summarize your manuscript, or repeat the abstract
  - Mention what would make your manuscript special to the journal
- Mention special requirements, e.g. if you do not wish your manuscript to be reviewed by certain reviewers, and any conflicts of interest.
- Albeit that most editors will not reject a manuscript only because the cover letter is bad, but a **good cover letter may accelerate the editorial process of your paper.**

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Suggest potential reviewers

- Be prepared to suggest 3-6 potential reviewers.
- Your suggestions will help the Editor to move your manuscript to the review stage more efficiently.
- You can easily find potential reviewers and their contact details from articles in your specific subject area (e.g., your references).
- The reviewers **should represent at least two regions of the world**. And they should not be your supervisor or close friends.

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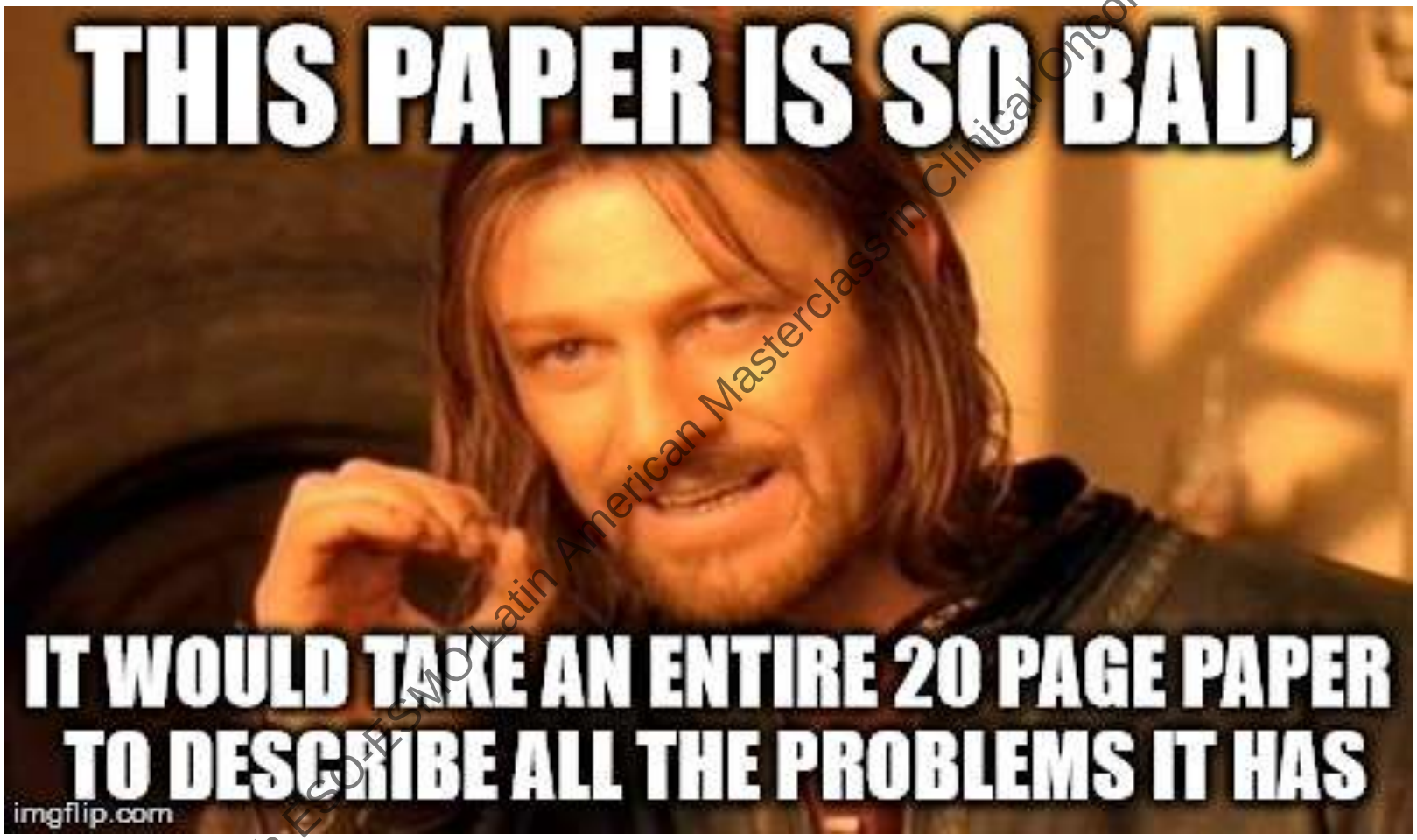

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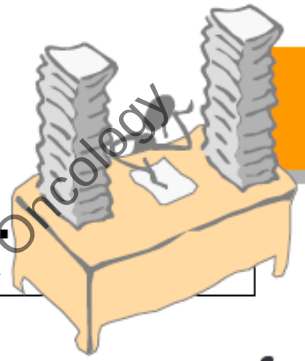
More submissions of lower quality
→ STRESS for editors and reviewers..



Editors and reviewers are the **most precious resource** of a journal!

- Editors and reviewers are practicing scientists, even leaders in their fields. They are **not professional** journal staff – they do journal work **on top of** their own research, writing and teaching.
- They are busy people who work for journals **to contribute to science.**
- Editors may receive a small payment, but reviewers are **UNPAID**.
- Every manuscript takes up their precious time!
  Nowadays they are working **even harder**!

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Select the best journal for submission

- Look at **your references** – these will help you narrow your choices.
- **Review** recent publications in **each candidate journal**. Find out the hot topics, the accepted types of articles, etc.
- Ask yourself the following questions:
  - Is the journal **peer-reviewed**?
  - Who is this journal's **audience**?
  - What is the **average time to print or online**?
  - What is the journal's **Impact Factor**?
- Decide on **one** journal. DO NOT submit to multiple journals.

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What is the Impact Factor (IF)?

Impact Factor

[the average annual number of citations per article published]

- For example, the 2008 impact factor for a journal is calculated as follows:
  - *A* = **the number of times articles published** in 2006 and 2007 were cited in indexed journals during 2008
  - *B* = the number of "citable items" (usually articles, reviews, proceedings or notes; not editorials and letters-to-the-Editor) published in 2006 and 2007
  - 2008 impact factor = *A*/*B*
  - **e.g. $\frac{\text{600 citations}}{\text{150 + 150 articles}} = 2$**

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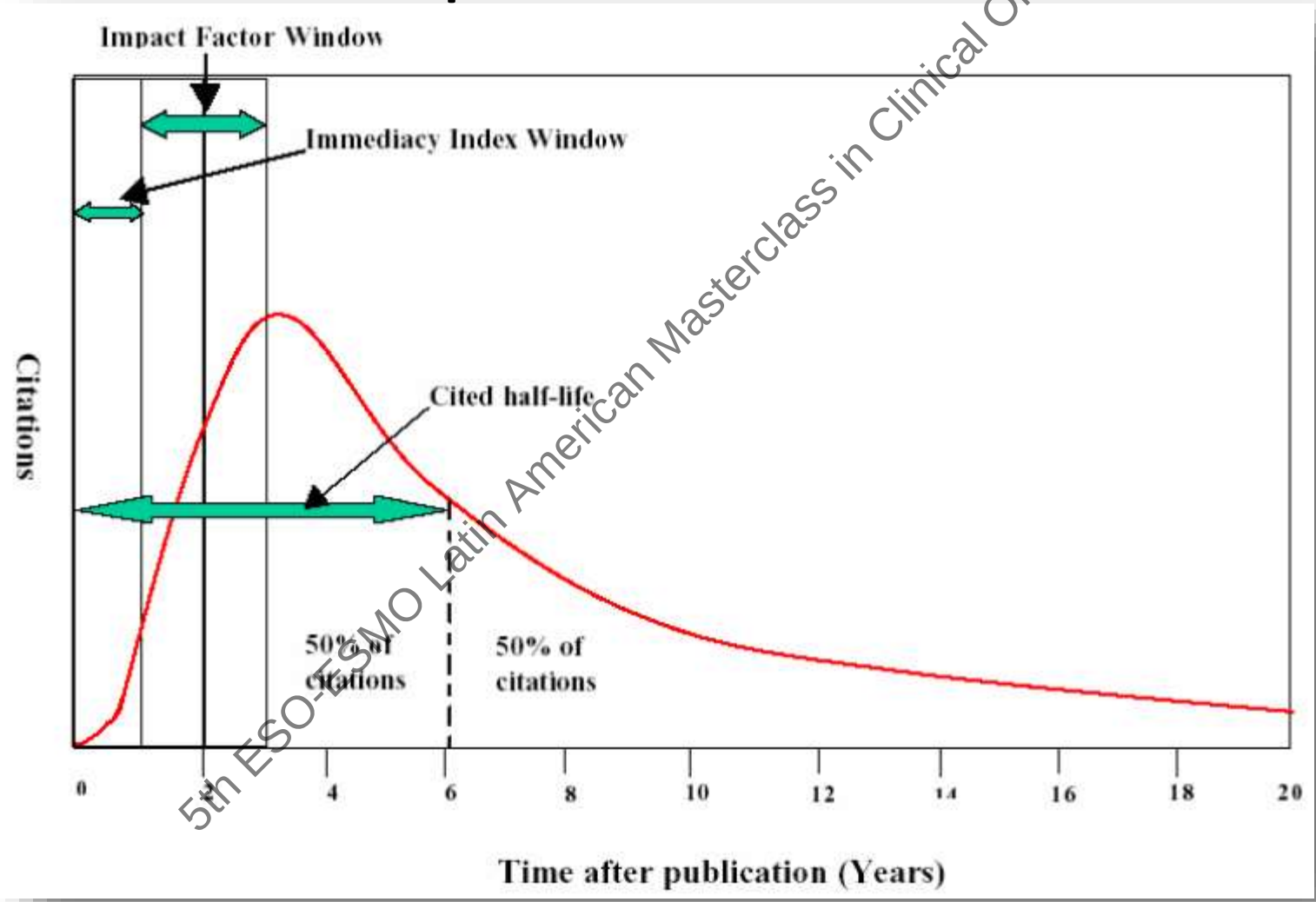
Impact Factor and other bibliometric parameters



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Also a prestigious journal publishes non cited articles

However, not all articles in high impact journals (e.g. about 20% im Nature, Impact Factor= 32.2) are cited!

3.	**South Africa doubles budget for medical research and AIDS.** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	[No author name available]	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 850	0
4.	**Top BSE official forced to step down in UK** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Dickson, D.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 849	0
5.	**Japan to bring in mandatory tests for GM foods** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Uozum, Y.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 846	0
6.	**Threat to research in Spanish universities [3]** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Vazquez-Boland, J.A.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 852	0
7.	**NSF under fire in survey of customer satisfaction** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Smaglik, P.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 846	0
8.	**Concern as Germany cuts funds to agricultural research centres** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Schlermelet, Q., Dalton, R., Macllwain, C.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 845-846	0
9.	**Spain's universities split over merits of performance table** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher Full Text	Bosch, X.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 848	0
10.	**Geophysics union entices biologists with new section** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Dalton, R.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 847	0
11.	**Green light for neutrino beam to pass below the Alps** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Abbott, N.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 847	0
12.	**Scientists rally to defend schools against creationists** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Dalton, R.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 847-848	0
13.	**Suffering for one's science** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Whitfield, J.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 857	0
14.	**Latecomers welcome? [2]** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Davies, D.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 852	0
15.	**Dissection banned in Israeli schools** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Watzman, H.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 845	0
16.	**Erratum: Saccharomyces cerevisiae telomerase is an Sm small nuclear ribonucleoprotein particle (Nature (1999) 401 (177-180))** Abstract + Refs View at Publisher	Seto, A.C., Zaug, A.J., Sobel, S.G., Wolin, S.L., Cech, T.R.	1999 *Nature* 402 (6764), pp. 898	0

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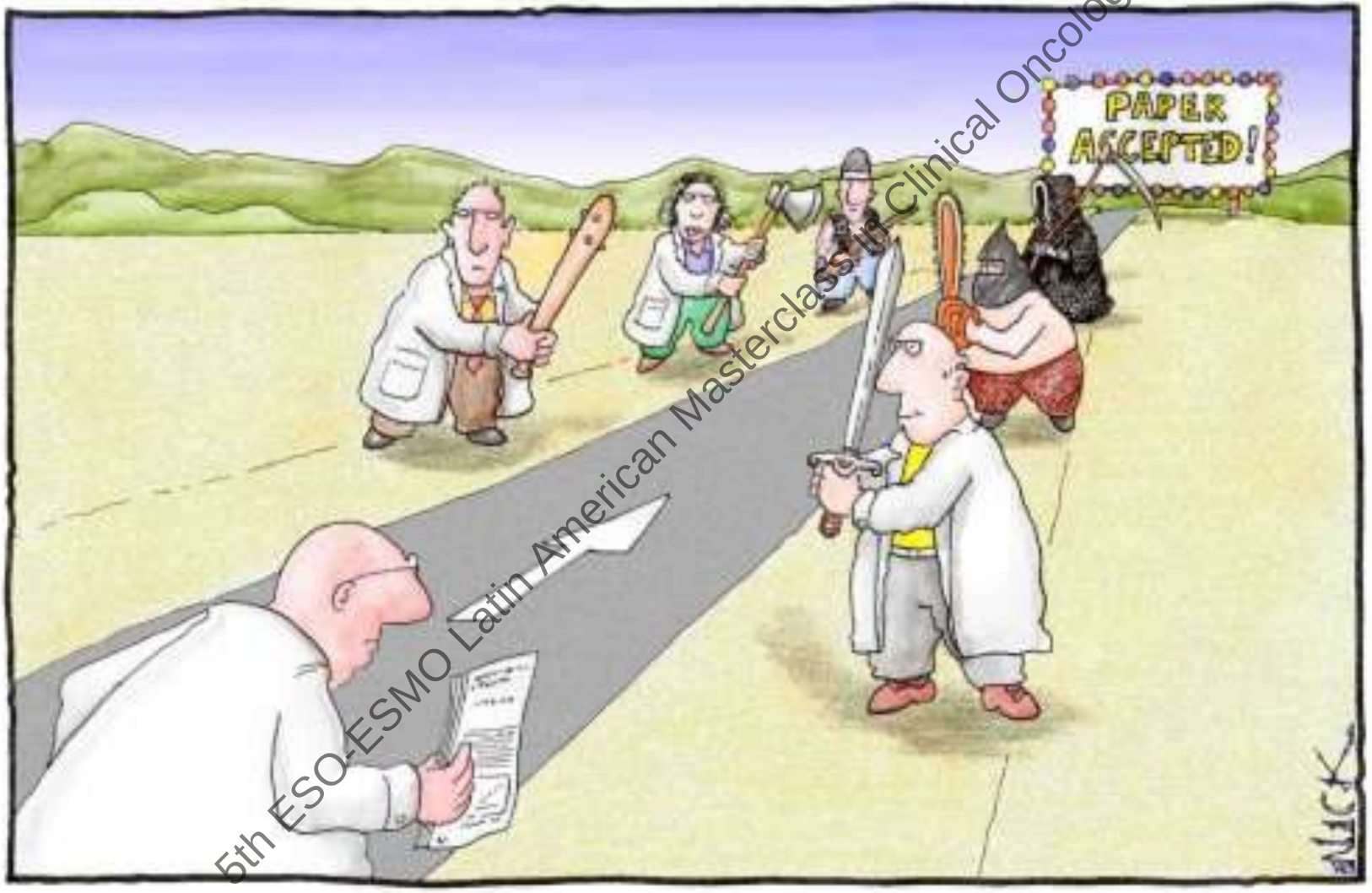
The review and editorial process



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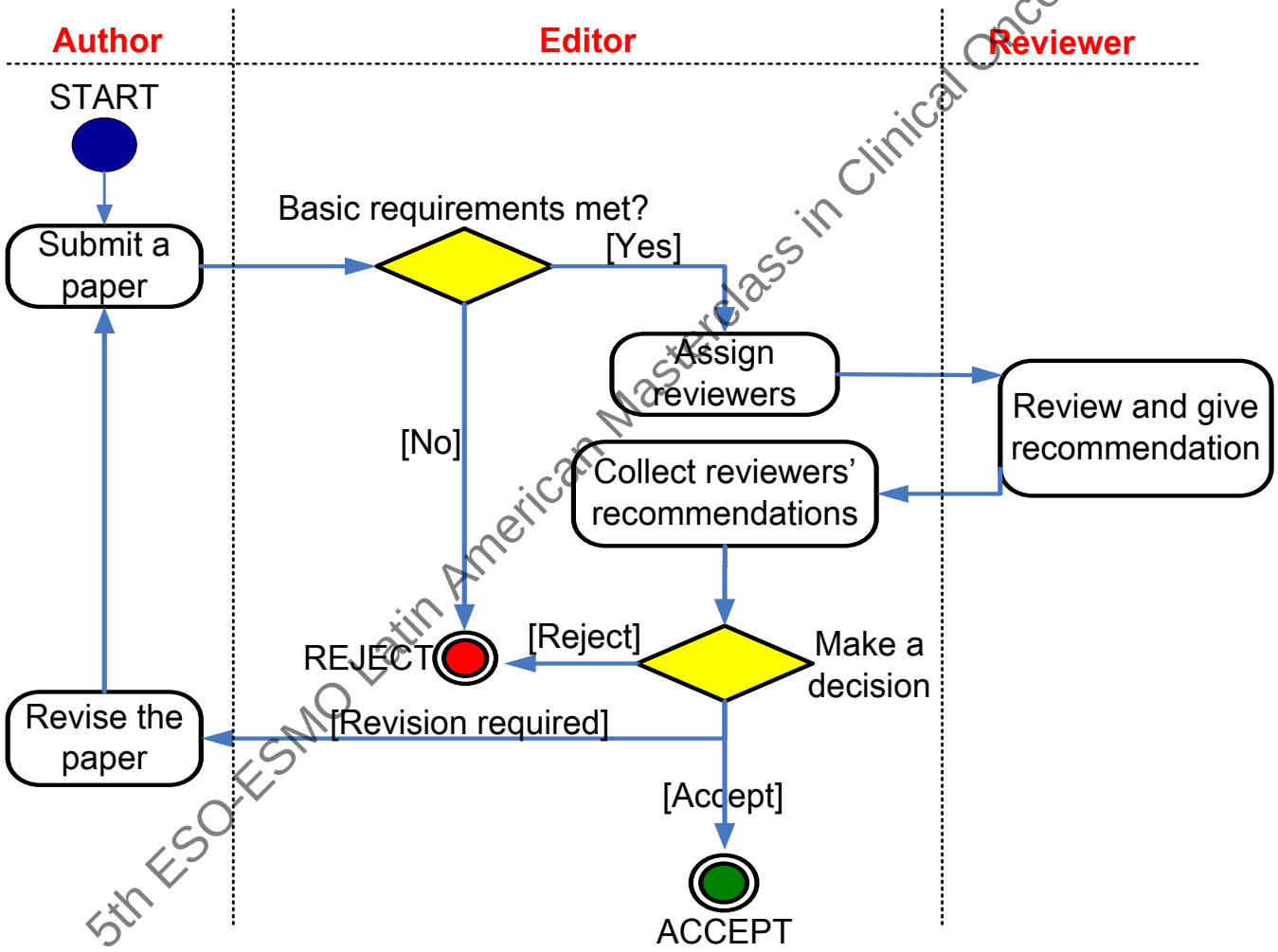
Submission is not a “black hole”



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Michael Derntl. Basics of Research Paper Writing and Publishing.
http://www.pri.univie.ac.at/~derntl/papers/meth-se.pdf

Initial Editorial Review

Many journals use a system of initial editorial review. Editors may reject a manuscript without sending it for review

Why?

- The peer-review system is grossly overloaded and editors wish to use reviewers only for those papers with a good probability of acceptance.

- It is a disservice to ask reviewers to spend time on work that has clear and evident deficiencies.

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Review results…

- Consider reviewing as a procedure in which several peers discuss your work. Learn from their comments, and join the discussion.
- Nearly every manuscript requires revision.
- **Bear in mind that editors and reviewers mean to help you improve your article**
  - **Do not take offense.**
- Minor revision does NOT guarantee acceptance after revision.
  - Do not count on acceptance, but address all comments carefully
- Revise the whole manuscript
  - not just the parts the reviewers point out

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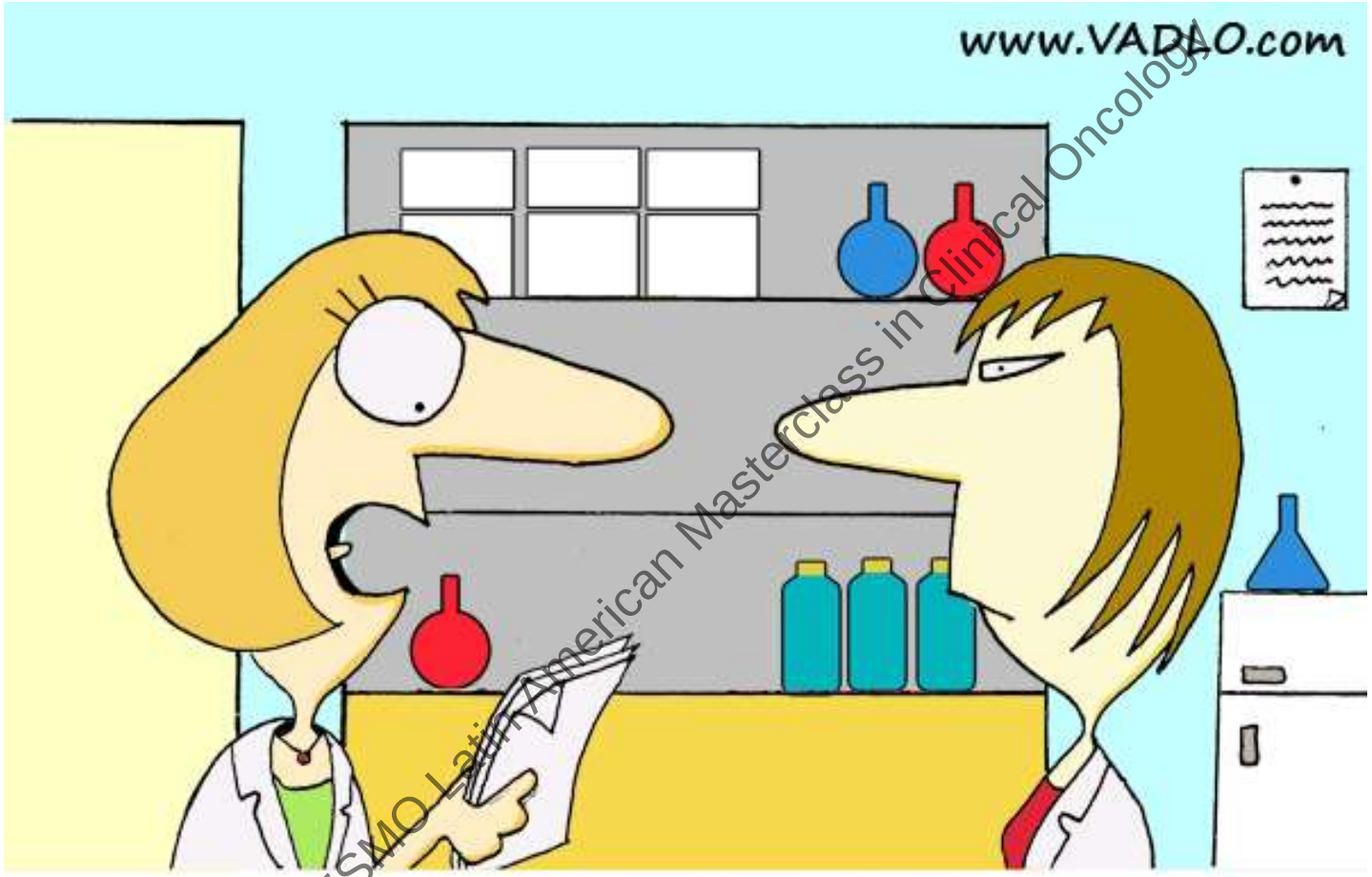

"Editor says the manuscript would serve some purpose if it were written on toilet paper."

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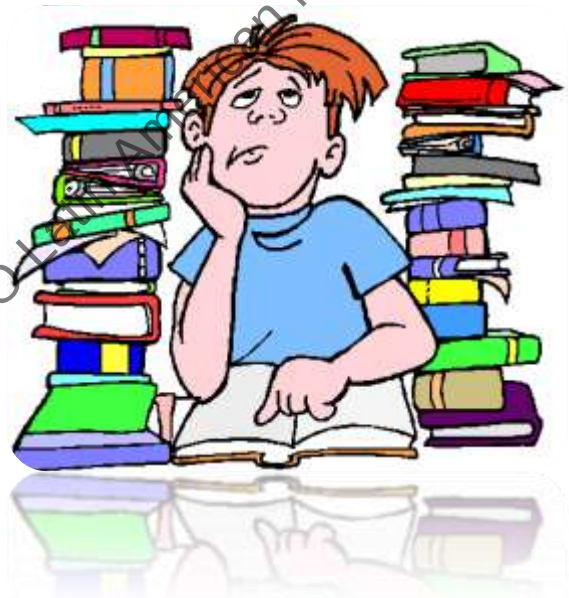
Revision after submission

Carefully study the comments and prepare a detailed letter of response.



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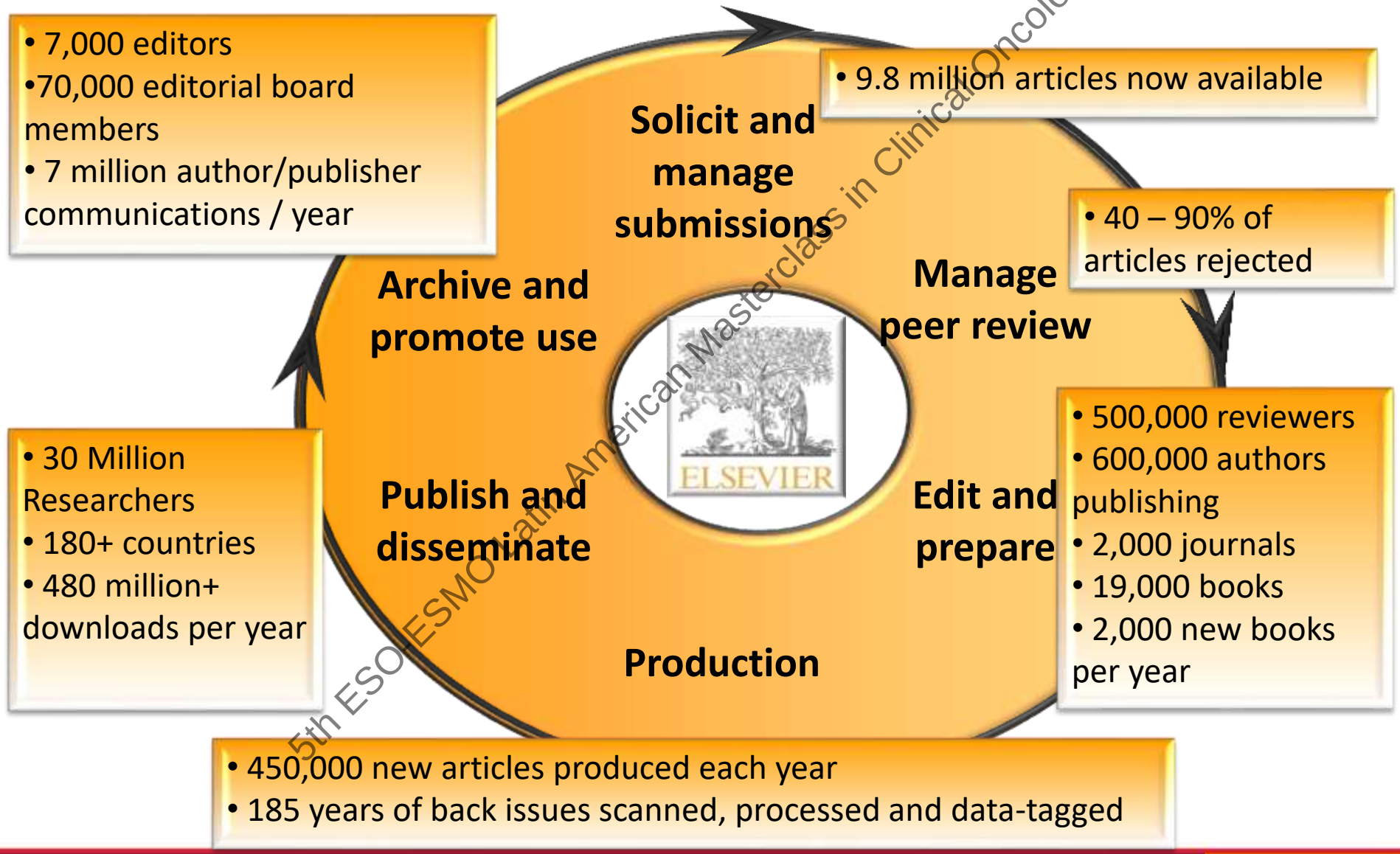
Elsevier and Publishing



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Plagiarism

"Go ahead. Don't think of it as plagiarism, think of it as an homage."

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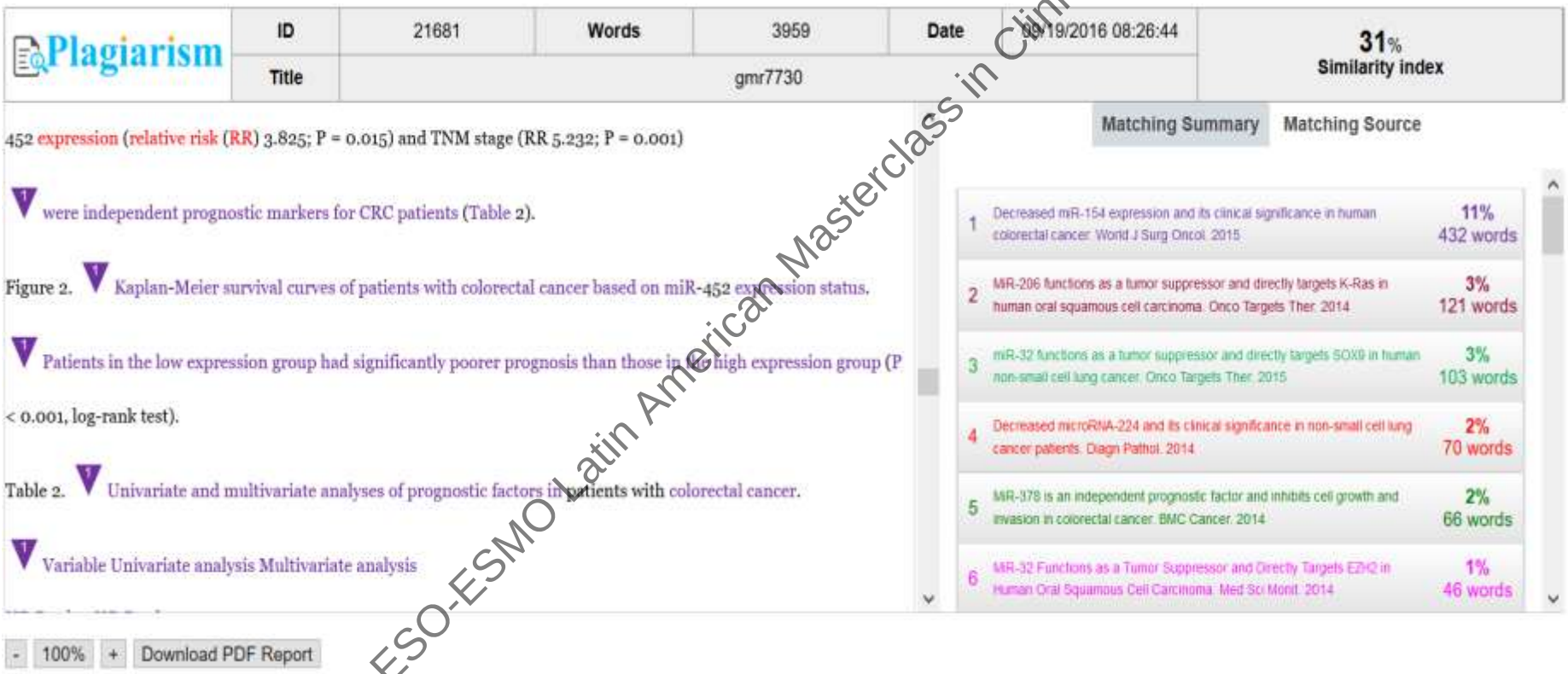
Plagiarism



Plagiarism

ID	21681	Words	3959	Date	09/19/2016 08:26:44	31% Similarity index
Title	gmr7730					

452 expression (relative risk (RR) 3.825; P = 0.015) and TNM stage (RR 5.232; P = 0.001)

were independent prognostic markers for CRC patients (Table 2).

Figure 2. Kaplan-Meier survival curves of patients with colorectal cancer based on miR-452 expression status.

Patients in the low expression group had significantly poorer prognosis than those in the high expression group (P < 0.001, log-rank test).

Table 2. Univariate and multivariate analyses of prognostic factors in patients with colorectal cancer.

Variable Univariate analysis Multivariate analysis

Matching Summary | Matching Source

1	Decreased miR-154 expression and its clinical significance in human colorectal cancer. World J Surg Oncol. 2015	11% 432 words
2	MiR-206 functions as a tumor suppressor and directly targets K-Ras in human oral squamous cell carcinoma. Onco Targets Ther. 2014	3% 121 words
3	miR-32 functions as a tumor suppressor and directly targets SOX9 in human non-small cell lung cancer. Onco Targets Ther. 2015	3% 103 words
4	Decreased microRNA-224 and its clinical significance in non-small cell lung cancer patients. Diagn Pathol. 2014	2% 70 words
5	MiR-378 is an independent prognostic factor and inhibits cell growth and invasion in colorectal cancer. BMC Cancer. 2014	2% 66 words
6	MiR-32 Functions as a Tumor Suppressor and Directly Targets EZH2 in Human Oral Squamous Cell Carcinoma. Med Sci Monit. 2014	1% 46 words

- 100% + Download PDF Report

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Plagiarism

GMR7730

Decreased miR-452 expression in human colorectal cancer and its tumor suppressive function. Genet Mol Res. 2016 May 23;15(2). doi: 10.4238/gmr.15027730.

PMID: 27323070

Decreased miR-452 expression in human colorectal cancer and its tumor suppressive function

T. Tang, G.C. Zhang, C.F. Li, Y.F. Liu and W.Y. Wang

Department of Gastrointestinal Surgery, China-Japan Friendship Hospital, Peking, China

Corresponding author: W.Y. Wang
E-mail: drwangwy@163.com

Genet. Mol. Res. 15 (2): gmr.15027730
Received September 25, 2015
Accepted January 15, 2016
Published May 23, 2016

1. s12957-015-0607-5

Decreased miR-154 expression and its clinical significance in human colorectal cancer. World J Surg Oncol. 2015 Jun 6;13:195. doi: 10.1186/s12957-015-0607-5.

PMID: 26048406 PMCID: PMC4472271

Kai et al. World Journal of Surgical Oncology (2015) 13:195
DOI 10.1186/s12957-015-0607-5

WORLD JOURNAL OF SURGICAL ONCOLOGY

RESEARCH Open Access

Decreased miR-154 expression and its clinical significance in human colorectal cancer

Yang Kai[†], Cheng Qiang[2†], Pan Xinxin[1], Zhou Miaomiao[1] and Lin Kuailu[1*]

Received: 27 January 2015 Accepted: 20 May 2015
Published online: 06 June 2015

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Plagiarism

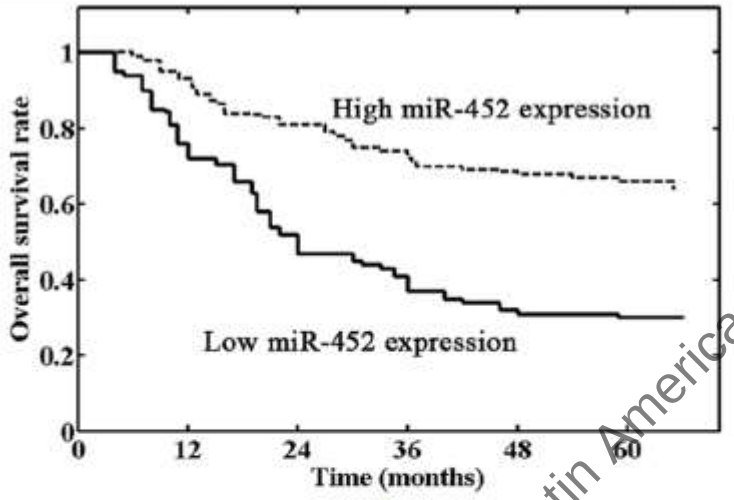

Fig 2

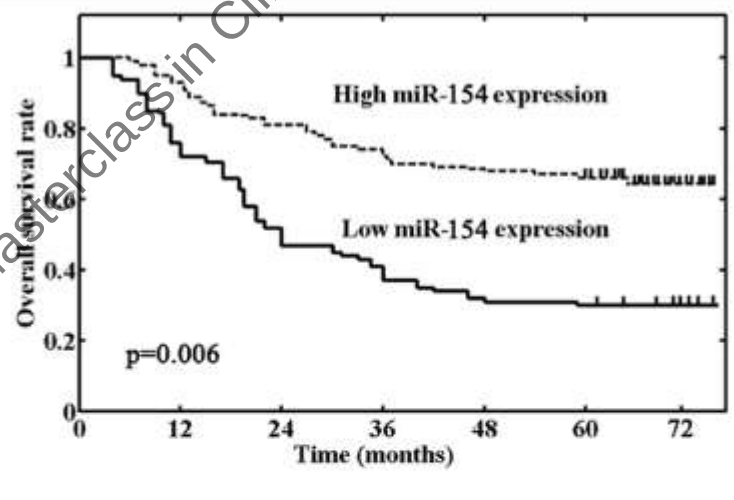

Fig 2

Table 2. Univariate and multivariate analyses of prognostic factors in patients with colorectal cancer.

Variable	Univariate analysis		Multivariate analysis	
	HR	P value	HR	P value
Age (years)	1.632	[illegible]	-	-
Gender	1.134	[illegible]	-	-
Histological grading	1.704	[illegible]	-	-
Tumor size	2.629	0.025	2.116	0.078
Depth of invasion	2.388	0.032	1.524	0.283
Tumor site	1.226	0.634	-	-
Clinical stage	4.973	< 0.001	5.232	0.001
miR-452 level	4.178	< 0.001	3.825	0.015

Table 2

Table 2 Univariate and multivariate analyses of prognostic factors in colorectal cancer

Variable	Univariate analysis			Multivariate analysis		
	HR	95 % CI	*P* value	HR	95 % CI	*P* value
Age (years)	1.632	0.761- 3.534	0.215	–	–	–
Gender	1.134	0.533- 2.443	0.759	–	–	–
Histological grading	1.704	0.792- 3.668	0.173	–	–	–
Tumor size	2.629	1.132- 5.237	0.026	2.116	0.945- 4.572	0.078
Depth of invasion	2.388	1.076- 5.224	0.032	1.524	0.635- 3.762	0.283
Lymph node metastasis	5.395	1.986- 10.655	0.004	4.958	1.823- 10.115	0.005
Clinical staging	2.973	1.202- 6.488	0.015	5.232	1.998- 12.685	0.001
MiR-154	3.178	1.436- 9.356	0.006	2.825	1.006- 5.132	0.022

Table 2

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Predatory Journals

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erican Masterclass in Clinical Oncology

How predatory publishers operate

- Experts at manipulative spamming
- Target young and emerging researchers
- They mimic legitimate publishers in many ways

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How predatory publishers operate

- They lie; they are counterfeit publishers
- They are often one-man operations
- Author-oriented vs. reader oriented
- Customers include unlucky honest folks and complicit folks
- Chiefly in Asia and Africa, but also many in the UK, Ontario, Australia, and the US
- They also operate bogus conferences
- Journals with broad coverage

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Fake metrics

- Fake metrics (or misleading metrics) are numbers that are just "made up" and assigned to journals, etc.
- Companies sell these metrics and call them "impact factors"
- Publishers use fake metrics on their websites and in their spam email to make their journals look like real ones and attract more papers
- Problem: The real impact factor data is not free

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Checklist: Editorial Board

- **Is an actual person identified as the editor?**
  - Is their contact information and affiliation listed?
- **Is an editorial board listed?**
  - If so, what is the make-up of the editorial board?
    - How many members?
    - Are affiliations & degrees included?
- **What is the geographic diversity of the editorial board/staff?**
  - Are they all from the same country or institution?

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(Beall 2015; Berger & Cirasella 2015)

Fake journals

Journal of Biophysics and Biochemistry

Dear Dr.Christian Rolfo ,

Greetings Journal of Biophysics and Biochemistry!!!

We trust this mail finds you well.

It is our immense pleasure to introduce our new journal Journal of Biophysics and Biochemistry

We would like to appreciate your contribution towards the scientific community by publishing your valuable work.

We have gone through your article "Liquid biopsies in lung cancer: the new ambrosia of researchers " and found it really knowledgeable.

It is my great honour & privilege to invite an researcher like you to contribute Original Research, Review, Case report, short commentaries, rapid communications, letter to editor, perspectives, opinion, hypothesis etc. for the Inaugural Issue November, 2017. Author may submit their manuscripts through the journal's online submission by mailing at biophysics@scientificres.com , biophysics@biologyinsights.com

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The fake invitations

Subject: Dear Christian Rolfo, join us at upcoming 2nd World Congress on Nutrition and Obesity

Dear Dr. Christian Rolfo

We are delighted to announce the upcoming 2nd World Congress on Nutrition and Obesity Prevention Source which will be held during 19-21 April 2018, Valencia, Spain.

Nutrition and Obesity is a scientifically focused conference with which covers a wide range of critically important sessions from basic research to innovations in the field of Nutrition.

Based on your expertise and your contributions in the field, we request you to join the conference, participate as a speaker/delegate. Share your thoughts, network with different cultures and debate with the conference team.

For more details please visit: http://nutritioncongress.com/2018/

You can submit you're abstract online at: http://nutritioncongress.com/2018/abstract-submission.php

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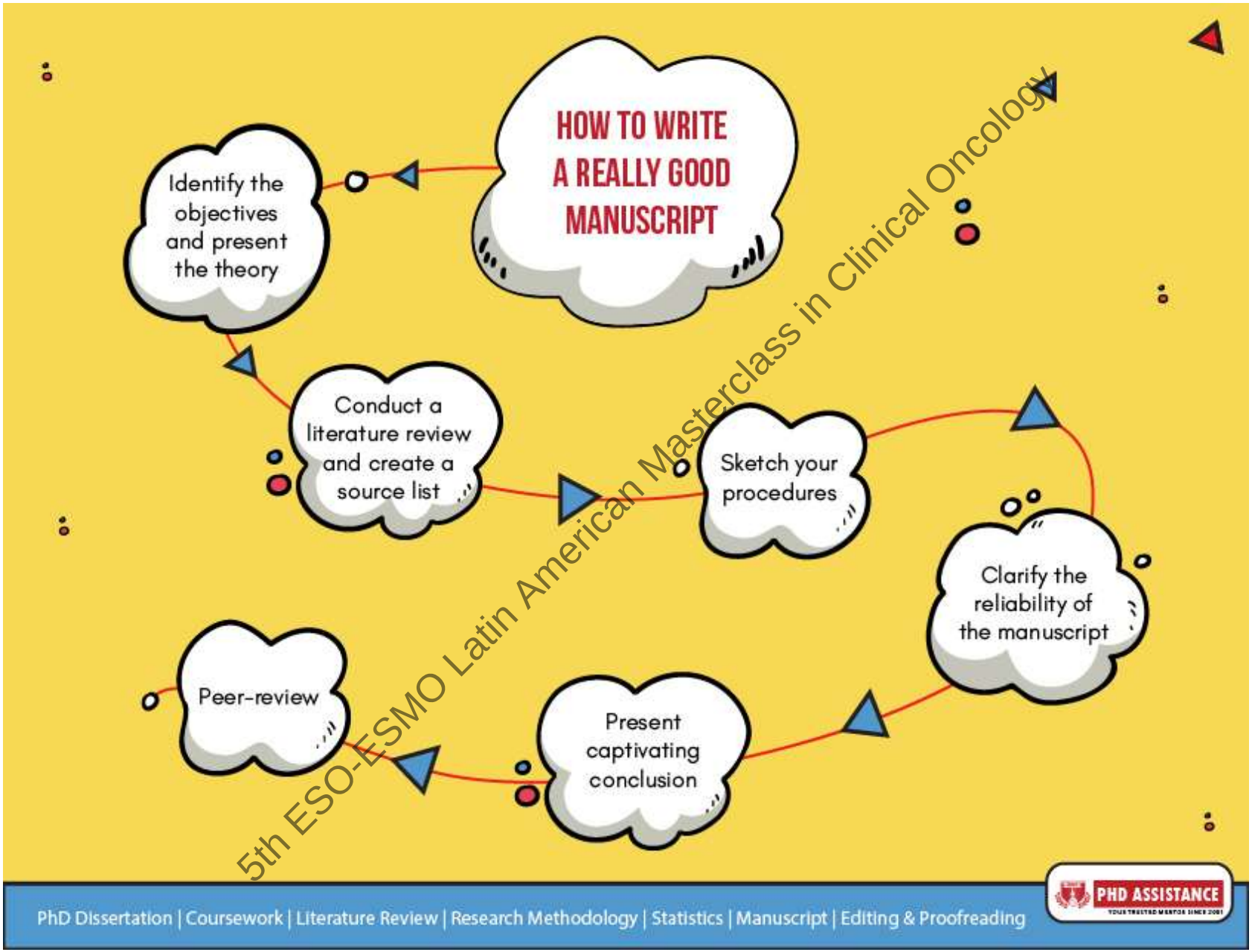

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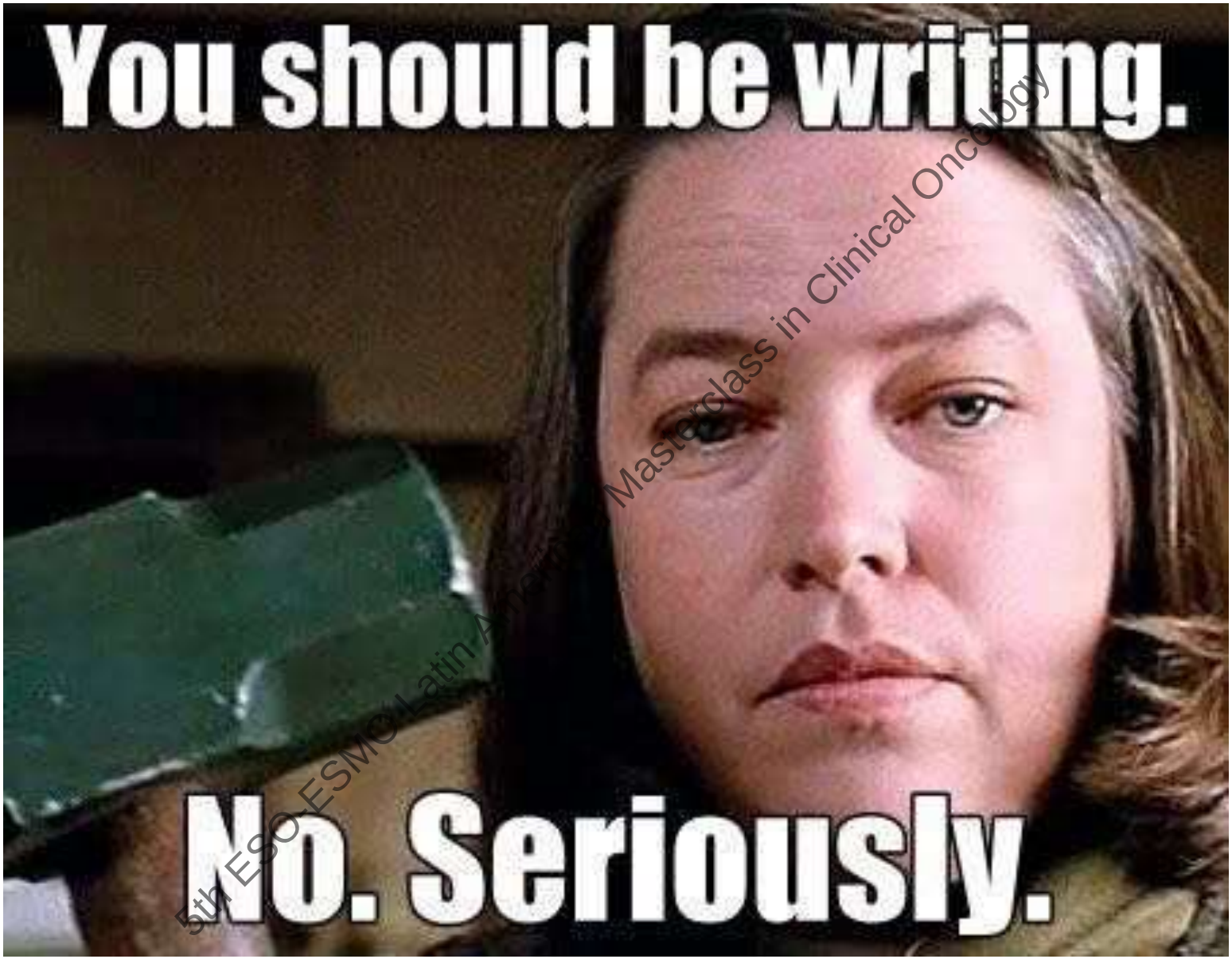

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Thanks

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